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TAGS: [ECON](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [EFIN](#) [CI](#)  
SUBJECT: Sept. 21 Media Report

Lead Story

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[¶1.](#) Twenty-three people died in car accidents over the "Dieciocho" long holiday. All of them were related to alcohol consumption (Conservative, independent, La Tercera, 9/21).

Salitre Exercise

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[¶2.](#) Background: At Unasur, Peru's President proposed that South American countries sign a "non- aggression pact." On Thursday, Chilean Defense Minister Francisco Vidal said that such agreements are signed when there is the threat of an aggression, adding that the initiative reminded him of the agreement signed by Nazi Germany and Russia in 1939. Peru was not happy with Vidal's remarks and its officials decided not to attend a tribute in Lima in honor of Chilean patriot Bernardo O'Higgins or a reception at the Chilean Ambassador's residence to celebrate Chile's Independence Day, triggering a new period of tension between both countries (La Tercera, 9/18-9/21).

[¶3.](#) Although until yesterday there was no reaction yet to Vidal's remarks, Peruvian Defense Minister Rafael Reyes asked Chile to cancel the "Salitre" air force military exercise in Antofagasta. "Just as we canceled a military exercise last year to avoid any misunderstanding, we would like Chile to have the same attitude," said Reyes (La Tercera 9/18)

[¶4.](#) Peruvian Defense Minister Rafael Reyes urged Chile to cancel the 2009 "Salitre" exercise in Antofagasta "just as Peru canceled several programs in Arequipa to avoid any misunderstanding." In the exercise a multinational peace force formed by Chilean, U.S., French, Argentine, and Brazilian air force contingents confront a country that does not comply with international treaties (Conservative, influential El Mercurio, 9/21).

[¶5.](#) Foreign Minister Fernandez asked Peruvian authorities not to

link Minister Vidal's remarks regarding Peru's proposal of a non-aggression pact among South American countries to the 2009 "Salitre" exercise in northern Chile. Peru's Defense Ministry is uneasy with the exercise and has urged Chile to cancel it. Chile, however, has rejected the request stating that the exercise is to increase peace mission preparation (La Tercera, 9/18).

#### Chile-Peru

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¶16. Chilean Foreign Minister Mariano Fernandez said yesterday that the government "values" President Alan Garcia's initiative to make military issues transparent, but does not agree with his proposal regarding a non-aggression agreement, because it reflects a kind of language used by totalitarian regimes (La Tercera, 9/18).

¶17. In spite of the tension created by Minister Vidal's opposition to Peru's proposal for a non-aggression pact, Peruvian Ambassador Carlos Pareja attended Chile's annual Military Parade on Saturday. The GOC saw this as an effort to lower tension between the two countries (El Mercurio, 9/20).

¶18. Chilean Foreign Minister Mariano Fernandez said he accepted "in good faith" the explanation given by Peruvian Ambassador Carlos Pareja on the absence of Peruvian officials at a tribute in Lima for Chilean patriot Bernardo O'Higgins. Pareja said it had been "a mistake." In Chile, the Foreign Ministry is annoyed with Minister Vidal's role in the recent conflict with Peru (La Tercera, 9/20).

¶19. Foreign Minister Fernandez believes that Peruvian President Alan Garcia "is mistaken in the language he used, because non aggression agreements are signed when countries are on the verge of war, when we are not even close to that." Fernandez added that Chile "clearly understands" that the proposal is intended for South America as a whole and not just Chile and Peru (Government-owned La Nacion, 9/19-09/26).

#### U.S.-Related News

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¶10. In an interview, SOUTHCOM Brigadier General David C. Garza explained that the agreement with Colombia gives the United States access to seven bases and is an extension of previous agreements. He said this would allow the United States to continue supporting Colombia on its fight against narcotics and weapons trafficking and narco-terrorism. "We have no intention to set up bases in Colombia," said Garza, underscoring that the agreement limits the number of military and contract personnel. "We have nothing to hide with this agreement," he said, adding that he believes the region's concern is the result of lack of information. Garza was asked if the United States is concerned about Hugo Chavez. "We have over 40 years of good friendship with Venezuela.... We respect the sovereign rights of nations and decision to modernize their military systems," he said (La Tercera 9/18).

¶11. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton wrote President Bachelet a letter congratulating her on a new Independence Day. In her letter, the secretary praised the "strong and deep bilateral ties" and said this is "an opportunity to celebrate Chile's strong democracy" (La Tercera, 9/19).

¶12. Secretary Clinton's letter congratulating Chile on its Independence Day was well taken by the Executive Office and Foreign Ministry (Government-owned La Nacion, 9/18)

¶13. Secretary Clinton joined Chile on its patriotic celebration by dedicating a few lines to all Chileans: "On behalf of the people of the United States I would like to express my sincere congratulations to the people of Chile on its 199 years of independence" (High-circulation popular daily Las Ultimas Noticias 9/20).

¶14. In New York, President Bachelet will attend a dinner hosted by U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon. President Obama will also attend. Earlier that same day, Bachelet and Obama will also be among the speakers at the annual session of the Clinton Global Initiative. On Tuesday, Bachelet and Secretary Clinton will attend the launching of the Inter-American Social Protection Network and on Wednesday Bachelet will speak before the Council of the Americas (El Mercurio, 9/19).

#### Chile/Peru Maritime Claim

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¶15. Chile has until March 2010, to counter the maritime border claim filed by Peru with the International Court of The Hague. Chile's strategy will be to show that since 2005, Peru has changed its laws to support its border claim: In 2005, it passed a law that unilaterally set new points of reference along the coast to place the sea that is currently under Chilean jurisdiction --in accordance to treaties --, under Peru's jurisdiction; In August 2007, Peru's new official cartography shows that the sea under Chilean jurisdiction "is an area in dispute;" In January 2008, a new bill unilaterally assigns the "Punto de Concordia" as the point of reference to set the land border between the two countries. The treaties in effect between the two countries set the border using the "Landmark 1" point (El Mercurio, 9/18)

#### Survey

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¶16. El Mercurio/Opina conducted a survey in March 2006, which showed that only 28 percent thought that Bachelet would do a better job than her predecessor Ricardo Lagos. They have now repeated the poll and figures show that 71.3 percent believe she has outdone Lagos (El Mercurio, 9/20).

#### Honduras

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¶17. Chilean Foreign Minister Fernandez was asked on whether the United States has true political will to resolve the situation in Honduras. "The United States has labeled this a coup d'????tat, which is a very specific term, and is cutting off significant aid .... Don't read between the lines when things are very clear. The United States has closed its visa office in Tegucigalpa, which means that Hondurans cannot travel to the United States where there are two million Honduran immigrants. What stronger sanction can there be? The United States is being extremely rigorous with OAS decisions. I find this noteworthy, because the OAS front has not moved back an inch" (La Nacion, 9/20-9/26).  
URBAN